

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM): fishing in the GFCM Agreement area

2024/0098(COD) - 15/09/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 580 votes to 51, with 39 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 2023/2124 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 October 2023 on certain provisions for fishing in the GFCM (General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean) Agreement area.

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading on the Commission's proposal to transpose into European Union law the fisheries conservation and management measures adopted in 2021 and 2022 by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), to which the Union has been a contracting party since 1998.

The amended text emphasised that the GFCM recommendations must be **strictly transposed** in order to establish a level playing field for all operators, without burdening them beyond the legal obligations set by those recommendations.

The recommendations adopted by the GFCM should be **fully and in a timely manner implemented into Union law**, thereby enabling the Union to fulfil its international obligations as a reliable international partner, and to ensure their uniform and effective implementation within the Union, providing clarity and predictability for operators of Union fishing vessels.

The **recommendations** adopted by the GFCM concern, in particular:

- the establishment of a fisheries restricted area in the Jabuka/Pomo Pit in the Adriatic Sea;
- the establishment of a fisheries restricted area in the Gulf of Lion (geographical subarea 7) to protect spawning aggregations and deep-sea sensitive habitats
- the management measures for the sustainable exploitation of sprat and piked dogfish fisheries in the Black Sea;
- the mitigation of fisheries impacts for the conservation of sea turtles, cetaceans, and elasmobranchs in the Mediterranean Sea;
- a catch certificate scheme for turbot in the Black Sea;
- the establishment of a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;
- a multi-annual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea;
- a management plan for the sustainable exploitation of red coral in the Mediterranean Sea;

- a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of blackspot seabream in the Alboran Sea;
- a multi-annual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily;
- a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp stocks in the Strait of Sicily and the Ionian Sea;
- a multi-annual management plan for sustainable demersal trawl fisheries targeting giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp in the Levant Sea;
- the establishment of a set of minimum rules for sustainable recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea;
- an international joint inspection and surveillance scheme covering the waters outside national jurisdiction in the Strait of Sicily, as well as international joint inspection and surveillance scheme covering the waters outside national jurisdiction in the Ionian Sea;
- a long-term management plan for the European eel in the Mediterranean Sea.

In order to ensure that lost **fish aggregating devices** (FADs) do not contribute further to marine plastic pollution, FADs should be exclusively constructed with biodegradable materials from 15 August 2027.

The Commission is empowered to adopt **delegated acts** in respect of the implementation into Union law of amendments, which have become binding on the Union, to existing GFCM measures which have already been implemented into Union law. These concern:

- the transmission to the GFCM Secretariat of the list of authorised vessels for the purpose of the GFCM Register;
- the derogations from conservation measures for red coral;
- the implementation of the permanent catch documentation scheme (CDS) for red coral and for turbot;
- port state measures;
- the table, map and geographic coordinates of the GFCM geographical subareas;
- port state inspection procedures for vessels and the transshipment declaration.